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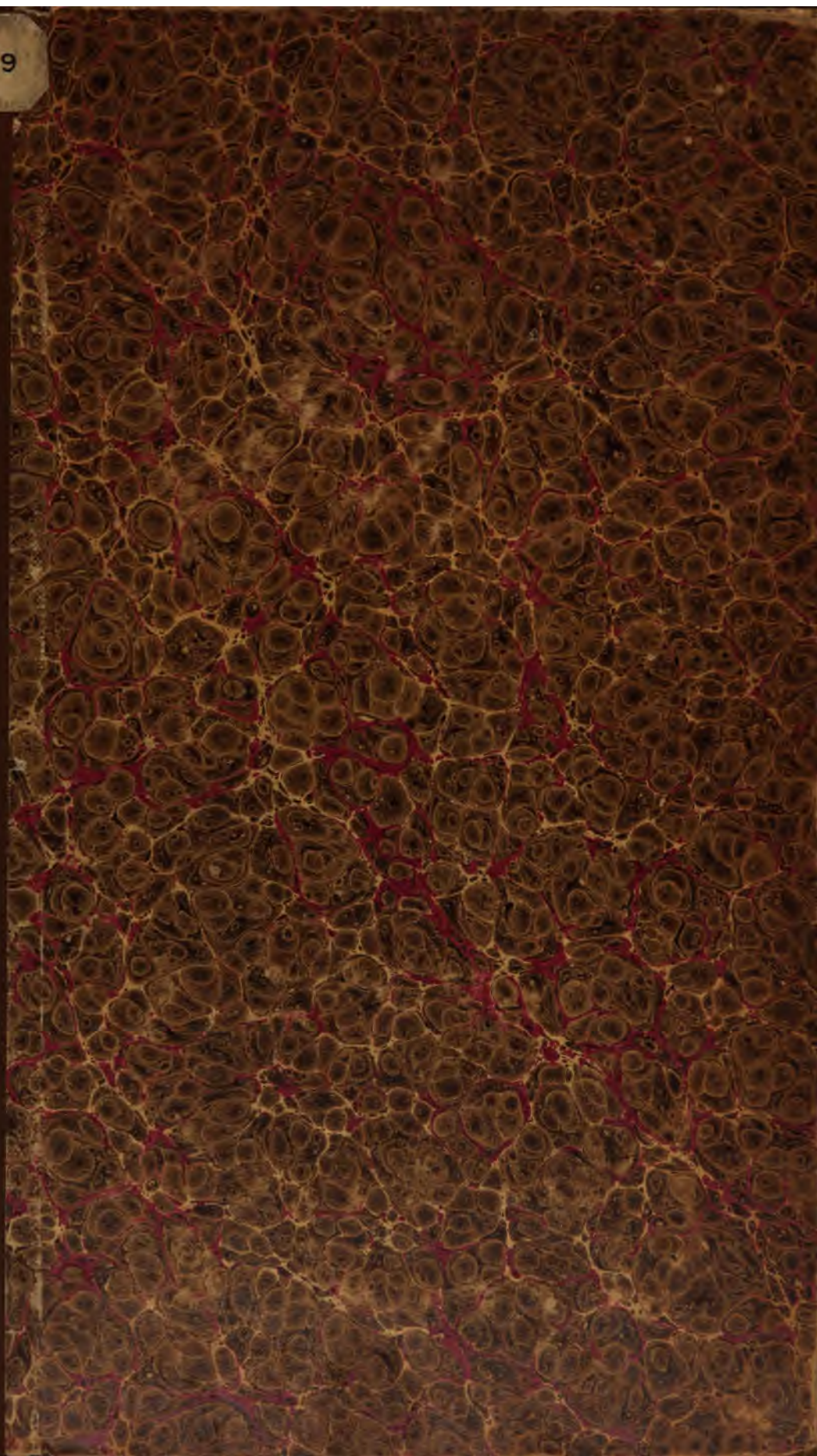
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Dockplates by Henry J. Stock. 1920.



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FROM

Alfred L. Potter

BOOKPLATES BY
HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.
BY JAMES GUTHRIE



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HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

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*Wm. C. Potter,
Cambridge.*



Orion

(Portrait of the Artist)

BOOKPLATES BY HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

A collection of the most modern Continental bookplates suggests to the mind that some primitive impulse has turned the grotesque and the caricature to the surface. The process had begun before the war in all the arts, as though some restless spirit had attacked civilization, and must first affect a change upon the means by which, from one age to another, mankind is expressed and interpreted.

In painting, contrast, angularity, ugliness react from the old spirit of atmosphere and beauty. In music, dissonance, even din, have become popular. Yet, I think the battle of which these are the outward signs, has always been more like a rebellion against Taste, that effeminate conception of art, than against those intimate and difficult forms of it which compel the artist to have a mental or spiritual as well as an optical intention; to have a vision of things which is free from the judgment of those who regard a



Earth Flower

BOOKPLATES BY HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

superficial resemblance to nature as the only tolerable one. This desire for freedom reasserts the continuing curve of tradition. If we lose the flimsier kinds of romanticism, the mere agreeableness of popular sentiment, and seem momentarily swamped in experiment and bravado, the problem may well be left to work itself out and trusted to leave us altogether richer for having discarded a mass of shallow and insincere stuff.

Older fashions in art do not of necessity perish in these reactions. From any standpoint, the essential rightness of those whom we hold to be great may still be regarded as an unaltered fact. We discern, dimly enough, through modern phases and fantasies of expression the brightness of an intelligence which we were in danger of taking for granted. Tradition moves slowly; it is not affected by movements, cults, or schools that are merely mushroom growth promoted by dealers. Of great themes, after all, there are only a few. Of permanent art there is only a little. Old fashions are those which have never had a firm hold upon us. This permanent idea of attaching meaning to form, or, should I say, of seeing and expressing form as the shape of meaning, is present in the designs made by Mr Stock for



The Vision Splendid

BOOKPLATES BY HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

bookplates. He is throughout his work as a painter consistently interested in definite themes, and his love of nature and the integrity of his drawing save what he does from being confused, or vapoury, or even idealistic in the sense that some artists accept as an excuse for careless workmanship.

Mr Stock's figures have bulk and weight, even when they are angels shown dimly in the vault among the planets. One understands immediately his traditional cast of mind, his affection for Michael Angelo, for Blake, for Watts. He accepts the weight of this vocation of his as a Sayer of Things. It is no charge levelled against him when one holds that he is didactic. These things are all plainly set forth, and present themselves without misgiving or apology; for he as naturally seeks the type as some are satisfied with the accident. In portraiture only he sets himself the single task of rendering the immediate likeness.

It is a tribute to the freshness of his mind that he should have been attracted by this art of the bookplate, an art which does not favour a superior or supercilious attitude in a man; an art which, if pliable and responsive is also ruled by

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JAMES GUTHRIE

Cloud Giants

BOOKPLATES BY HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

severe conditions. Mr Stock's respect for masterpieces such as Holbein's *Dance of Death*, and Dürer's *Little Passion*, and many another, is too sincere to let him overlook the fact that the greatest minds have submitted themselves to the discipline of small space.

The pictorial tendency of these designs fights a little against his obvious ability to make bookplates of the best kind; yet there is apparent in them all the artist's acquired curiosity as to how he may gain admittance to a new set of conditions without forsaking his natural inclinations. He brings to this art, indeed, a far greater individuality than the casual draughtsman who, having pitched upon a well-marked style, imitates its outward mannerism without life or zest. Mr Stock has considered the bookplate, not only as an adjunct to books in the abstract, but in due relation to the illustration of particular books. A skilful draughtsman may well discover that the formal and academic rules which have been for too long a time fastened upon him, are only relevant in so far as they are consistent with his own scheme of illustration; that in fact they may be laid aside to make way for anything intelligently constructive



Pain's Recompense

BOOKPLATES BY HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

in book-decoration. The spaces above and below his letterpress are governed as much by the character of the drawings as by the character of the type. Ornamental effect may be got by an overflow of design which has a feeling for decoration without being deliberately altered or formalized to an accepted pattern.

To say so much is not to countenance undue pictorialness in bookplates, but rather to put forward some truths about books which have at least an experimental value for the man whose work it is to design bookplates, or whose pleasure it is to collect them.

The present designs are certainly well worth attention. They are full of interest and charm. They are neither so pictorial as the pen-drawings of E. A. Abbey, nor so decorative as those of Walter Crane; which is equivalent to saying that they are free and at the same time controlled.

In these compositions one recognizes lines already laid down, but concentrated and for a new purpose. *Pain's Recompense* is the name of the artist's own bookplate, a very characteristic one. The *Sun-worshipper* happily describes the author of *Wanderings in Arabia* and *The Dawn*



H.J.S

I.M.S

Morning Song

BOOKPLATES BY HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.

in Britain, and *The Earth Flower* and *Cloud Giants* are titles which also make their demand upon these bookplates to express the individuality of their owners. In the *W.B.* design the artist has designed what must be called a memorial bookplate. William Blake can never use it as his bookplate; but if an owner's name were added, it would serve admirably for a collection of books by or about William Blake.

The *Iris* bookplate, radiant and ingenuous, is an ideal label for a child to use in her book. Noah's Ark figures and penny toys merely affect an infantile playfulness. His *Morning Song* design has, however, seriousness as well as serenity; it does not condescend to childhood.



The Soul and the Grass of the Field

**A LIST OF BOOKPLATES BY
HENRY J. STOCK, R.I.**

1. *The Clouds of Mortality*
for F. P. Osmaston 1885
2. *Sea Music*
for John Fulleylove 1887
3. *The Soul and the Grass of the Field*
for Mary S. Homer 1888
4. *Foam-born*
for The Hon^{ble} Cicely Leveson-Gower . 1890
5. *Sea Idyll*
for Granville Fell 1893
6. *Death and Innocence*
for Sir James D. Linton 1894
7. *Earth Flower*
for A. D. S. 1902
8. *The Vision Splendid*
for Charles M. Doughty 1909
9. *Pain's Recompense*
for Self 1912
10. *Cloud Giants*
for James Guthrie 1916
11. *Morning Song*
for I. M. S. 1919
12. *Lesbia's Sparrow*
for The Hon^{ble} Irma Monson . . . 1919



WB

A decorative flourish consisting of stylized, flowing lines that curve around the bottom of the letters 'WB'.

H.J.S

New Bookplate Books

Bookplates by Henry J. Stock, R. I., by James Guthrie. A critical essay on the work of Henry J. Stock, R. I., in particular and the Art of the Modern Bookplate in general. Nine illustrations, one in colours, of bookplates by Mr. Stock. Edition limited to 250 copies. Price \$1.00 per copy.

The Bookplate Calendar for 1920, presenting twelve artistic bookplates by famous artists, is a desirable item for bibliophiles, art collectors, and bookplate collectors. The *Calendar* is attractively printed and combines beauty and utility. It would make a most appropriate remembrance for your book-loving friends. Price \$1.00 per copy, postpaid.

A Directory of Bookplate Artists, with notes concerning their work, is of particular value to bookplate enthusiasts, persons contemplating having bookplates made, and to libraries. The *Directory* has been compiled entirely from data furnished by the artists themselves, the notes in each case dealing with the media in which the artist works, the style in which he specialises, the approximate cost of a design of his workmanship, and the length of time he has been making bookplates. The publication is well printed, in format uniform with *The Bookplate Booklet*, the edition being limited to 250 copies. The price is \$0.50, postpaid.

A Catalogue of Bookplates by Stanley Harrod presents seven bookplates by the artist, one of them an original etching, and a catalogue of the artist's bookplates. This publication is also uniform in format with *The Bookplate Booklet*, the edition being limited to 250 copies. The price is \$0.50 per copy.

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